

EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS TOOLKIT: HOW TO USE THESE DOCUMENTS:

Introduction

Access arrangements are put into place to ensure a level playing field for candidates with special educational needs and/or disabilities who would otherwise struggle to demonstrate their true capabilities and to prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage when compared to their peers.

All settings that provide external examinations need to consider whether they have candidates who require reasonable adjustments to be made, under the Equality Act, 2010 legislation. The exam access arrangement is a reasonable adjustment and is therefore only for candidate's whose difficulties are long-term and substantial.

All settings should have a system in place for making applications for exam access arrangements and should have trained staff to implement the arrangements. All senior leaders of a setting should be familiar with the updated JCQ Regs. every year.

All settings must comply with the most recent edition of the JCQ Regulations, which are updated every year.

This Toolkit is designed to provide Schools and Colleges with all the information they need to:

- process successful applications for access arrangements in external examinations,
- enable compliance with the JCQ Regulations
- understand their legal responsibilities.
- provide a system for quality assurance of exam access arrangements

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What are access arrangements?

Access arrangements in public exams (known as exam access arrangements, EAA) are viewed as reasonable adjustments which allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- Access the assessment (exam)
- Show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment (exam)

The intention is to meet the particular need of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Equality Act (2010) legislation (reasonable adjustments duty) requires that awarding bodies make reasonable adjustments where a candidate who is disabled would be at a **substantial disadvantage** in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to make reasonable steps to overcome this disadvantage which may be unique to the individual, as the arrangements will depend upon the specific needs of the candidate with SEND.

Access arrangements, therefore, enable awarding bodies to comply with their duty under the Equality Act (2010), to make reasonable adjustments for candidates with SEND.

Reasonable adjustments:

Whether an adjustment to an exam is considered to be reasonable will depend upon a number of factors, which include (but are not limited to):

- The needs of the disabled candidate
- The effectiveness of the adjustment
- The cost of the adjustment, and
- The likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates

The adjustment will not be approved if it:

- Involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body
- Involves unreasonable timeframes; or
- Affects the security and integrity of the assessment

Who is this Toolkit for?

Primarily, the Toolkit has been designed for SENCOs who ultimately have overarching responsibility for making the decisions relating to the specific access arrangements to be applied for, collating the evidence of need, and ensuring teachers are fully aware of their responsibility to be involved.

However, it will also be of use to other personnel, such as the Exams Officer or Exam Access Arrangements Coordinator. Members of the Senior Leadership Team, due to their overall oversight of the application process and requirement to ensure applications comply with current Regulations.

How to use this Toolkit?

The Toolkit is divided into sections which focus upon specific themes.

Section One - Information for SENCOs/Head of SEN Provision:

This section provides background information regarding processing applications for access arrangements, including:

- The process of applying for exam access arrangements
- Types of EAA by category
- Qualifications which are moderated by the JCQ
- Use of word processors
- JCQ Regs and FE Colleges
- Moving from Year 11 to 12
- How to complete a Form 8
- Interpreting assessment data
- EAA and EHCPs
- Completing a File Note for medical needs
- Suspected malpractice
- Frequently asked questions – SENCOs

Section Two: Information for Teaching/non-teaching Staff

This section provides information for teachers and others, to ensure they are made aware of their responsibilities. The materials, which are designed to be delivered by the SENCO directly to staff and include:

- Handouts for Teachers: EAA for Teachers: An Overview
- Glossary of Terms
- Types of exam access arrangements
- Behaviours to look out for in class
- Behaviours to look out for in exams

Section Three – Information for Parents

This section provides information for parents, which can be accessed directly by parents or provided by the school. They include the following handouts:

- Understanding the assessment process
- Leaflet for Parents
- Frequently asked questions by Parents
- Glossary of terms -parents

Section Four – Roles and Responsibilities

This section provides handouts regarding the roles and responsibilities of staff within the Centre relating to exam access arrangements. Specifically:

- The role of the SENCO
- The role of teachers
- The role of the Exams Officer
- The role of the Senior Leadership Team
- The role of the Specialist Assessor
- Protocols for Readers and Scribes

Section Five – Forms and Model Policies

Here you will find a number of forms and checklists which you can use directly to implement your EAA processes. The following documents are provided for use within the setting:

- Model Exam Access Arrangements Policy
- Model word processor policy
- Teacher Referral Form
- Teacher Evidence of Need Form
- Student Questionnaire
- Form 8 Summary Document
- Parent Questionnaire
- Template Detailed File Note – medical and complex needs
- Template Short File Note – Word processor/reader/prompter/rest breaks
- Template Letter to Parents
- Template Summary Spreadsheet

Section Six – Audit Documents

This section is designed for use by SENCOs and Senior Leaders to ensure the process and implementation of EAA is compliant with current JCQ Regs. The following documents are included:

- How to use these documents
- Exam Access Arrangements Policy Audit
- Exam Access Arrangements Checklist
- Completing a Form 8 Audit
- Teacher Self-Audit
- Senior Leader Self-Audit
- Exams Officer Self Audit
- SENCo Self-Audit
- Auditing Access Arrangements Evidence Files

SECTION ONE: Information for SENCOs/Heads of SEN Provision

Document	What information does the document provide?	How to use this document:
1. The Process of Applying for Exam Access Arrangements	An overview document to provide a single-view of the process of application for students who require a specialist assessment, Form 8 and application online	Use this as an aide memoire when making applications and to provide advice as to how to undertake the application process
2. Types of Exam Access Arrangements by Category	The types of access arrangements which are provided vary according to need. This document outlines the types of arrangements to consider for each category of need and specific diagnosis within each category. Only the main conditions are outlined; there will be other conditions which will also require EAAs based upon need, which are not mentioned. Each condition should be considered on a case-by-case basis.	Use this to inform your decision regarding which access arrangements to consider according to diagnoses and the information you are required to gather for each category of need.
3. Qualifications which are Moderated by the JCQ	This document provides you with a summary of which qualifications must comply with the JCQ Regulations. Other Exam Boards will have their own criteria for EAA.	Use when determining which qualifications are regulated by the JCQ and which have their own criteria for access arrangements.
4. Use of Word processors	The JCQ continue to update the requirements relating to the use of a word processor. Here you will find advice regarding when to allow the use of a word processor for a candidate.	Use this information to determine whether the use of a word processor is the appropriate arrangement for a candidate.
5. JCQ Regs. For FE Colleges	Working within the FE sector tends to encounter issues which are specific to this sector. This document outlines the current process of application based upon current JCQ Regulations.	Use this document to find out the procedure and processes for application for access arrangements, if you work within the FE sector
6. Moving from Year 11 to Year 12	The process of gathering evidence from Year 11 (GCSE) to sixth form (Y12) can often be open to interpretation. This document provides clear guidance for the process of gathering ongoing evidence of need as students move through the education system.	Use this document to help you to work out what you need to do with students who move from Year 11 to Year 12 from within and outside the setting.
7. How to complete the Form 8 Application	The Form 8 is the application form for EAA. It can often be complicated and time-consuming to complete. Here is a detailed overview of the information you need to gather to suitably complete the Form 8.	Use this document to aid your completion of Form 8s, as it provides you with the information you need to gather for its completion.

8. Interpreting assessment Data	<p>It is essential that SENCOs are able to interpret and understand assessment data provided by a specialist assessor. All assessment results must be recorded as standard scores and must fall into the JCQ required bands, when making an application for EAAs.</p>	<p>Use this form to aid your understanding of the assessment data information and to explain to others about how to interpret the scores.</p>
9. EAA and EHCPs	<p>The JCQ Regulations have changed regarding how applications are to be made for students who have an EHCP. This flow diagram gives an overview of what to do where a student has an EHC Plan in place.</p>	<p>Use this flow chart for aiding your understanding of how to implement EAA for students with an EHCP. You could use it during the annual review to inform others of the process of application for students with an EHC Plan.</p>
10. Completing a File Note for Medical Needs	<p>The JCQ Regulations have changed in the detail they require for students with medical needs. Here you will find all the information you need for completing a Detailed File Note.</p>	<p>Use this document when writing a Detailed File Note for students with medical needs, who are not assessed by a specialist assessor, to inform you of the information which is required to be provided.</p>
11. Suspected Malpractice	<p>Malpractice or maladministration can occur at any time and within any setting. This document constitutes information as to what it is and what to do about it when it is noticed.</p>	<p>Use this document in addition to the Malpractice (JCQ) document to aid your understanding of what to do if you think you have come across malpractice in your setting.</p>
12 Frequently Asked Questions: SENCOs	<p>SENCOs come across situations on a daily basis, where it is not clear and obvious what needs to be done. This document provides answers to some of the questions asked by SENCOs.</p>	<p>Refer to this document when you have questions which you cannot find the answer for anywhere else.</p>
9. Writing an Access Arrangements Policy	<p>Writing the access arrangements policy can be a convoluted process, particularly in the light of changes to JCQ regulations and the SEND code of practice (2015). This document, coupled with the template access arrangement policy in Section Six, will provide you with advice regarding what information needs to be included within the EAA policy.</p>	<p>Use this document, along with the template documents in Section Six to inform your writing of your access arrangements policy.</p>
10. Suspected Malpractice	<p>Sometimes a member of staff comes across what they may consider to be suspected malpractice or maladministration. The complexity of reporting suspecting malpractice is provided in accordance with JCQ regulations, associated with access arrangements</p>	<p>Use this overview in association with the JCQ Suspected Malpractice document (available on the JCQ Website) to determine what to do if a member of staff suspects malpractice has occurred.</p>

SECTION TWO: Information for Teaching/Non-teaching staff

Document	What information does the document provide?	How to use this document:
1. An Overview	Here is a handout that provides an overview of EAA; what they are and why they are necessary.	Use this document as a handout to staff when providing training on EAA.
2. Glossary of Terms	This document provides a glossary of the key terms which teachers may come across when receiving reports or summary reports of students with SEND leading to the implementation of access arrangements.	Make this glossary readily available for teachers, for them to understand the reports and information provided to them following specialist assessment.
3. Types of Exam Access Arrangements	Here is an overview of the types of EAA available, to understand the variety of arrangements which could be made where there is evidence of need.	Make this form available for teachers for them to refer to when considering EAA for students who they teach.
4. Behaviours to Look Out for in Class	Sometimes teachers become aware that a student is presenting with a difficulty which is acting as a barrier to their true performance. This checklist provides a summary of conditions and needs for teachers to be made aware of, which may indicate the need for an EAA.	Use this to train teachers in specific needs to be on the look-out for in class, which might indicate the need for an EAA. Teachers could use this alongside the Teacher Referral Form, if they have concerns.
5. Behaviours to Look out for in Exams	This checklist is designed to help all teachers to be on the look-out for difficulties which may be associated with a SEN or disability which may require an EAA.	Provide to teachers at the beginning of term when training them in EAA. Teachers could use this to aid their identification and referral of students who may require additional assessment.

SECTION THREE: Information for Parents

Document	What information does the document provide?	How to use this document:
1. Understanding the Assessment Process	This document gives an overview for parents to help them to understand more about EAA.	Use as a handout to support parents in their understanding of EAA processes.
2. Leaflet for Parents	This flyer outlines the basics of access arrangements to aid in this understanding.	Provide this handout to parents at an appropriate time in the assessment process.
3. Frequently Asked Questions	This document provides answers to some commonly encountered questions by parents.	Load onto your website or provide as a handout to parents as part of the EAA process.
4. Glossary of Terms	This document outlines some of the key vocabulary to aid parents' understanding.	Load onto your website or provide as a handout to parents as part of the EAA process.

SECTION FOUR: Roles and Responsibilities

Document	What information does the document provide?	How to use this document:
1. The Role of the SENCO	The purpose of these documents is to make clear the delineation of roles and responsibilities, and who is responsible for what. They outline the roles and responsibilities of each professional working within the setting, and how they fit into the jigsaw puzzle of making a successful application.	These documents can be referred to when clarification of roles is required. They are also useful when training personnel in who is responsible for what aspect of the process. They can be used as handouts during training.
2. The Role of Teachers		
3. The Role of Exams Officers		
4. The Role of the Senior Leadership Team		
5. The Role of the Specialist Assessor		
6. Protocols: Readers and Scribes	This document provides information relating to the roles of readers and scribes and outlines specifically what they can and cannot do.	This document is particularly useful when providing training for invigilators and those taking on the role of reader and scribe in addition to the information provided in the JCQ Regs.

CHAPTER FIVE: Forms and Model Policies

Document	What information does the document provide?	How to use this document:
1A. Model Access Arrangements Policy	All settings should have a policy relating explicitly to access arrangements. This document provides an example EAA Policy.	Use this document as a template for developing your access arrangements and use of word processor policy for your setting. Publish your EAA on your website.
1 Model Word Processor Policy	All settings are required to have a use of word processor policy. This document provides an example policy.	Use this document as a template for developing your own word processor policy> publish your policy on your website.
3. Teacher Referral Form	Teachers often identify students at any time in their school life and this Referral Form can be used by teachers to refer their concerns directly to the SENCO for further investigation.	Teachers should use this form when they have concerns relating to a student's performance, particularly in exams, which might be related to a special educational need. Ensure this form is available for teachers and they know where to find it.

4. Teacher Questionnaire: Evidence of Need Form	<p>Once a student is identified as SEND and needing access arrangements, it is the responsibility of the SENCO to gather evidence from subject teachers before completing the Form 8 Part 1. This questionnaire is designed to be issued to teachers before completion of the Form 8 in order to gather evidence to aid the completion of Part 1 and support the application for EAA.</p>	<p>This questionnaire should be issued to teachers for any student who is <u>already identified</u> as needing EAA. It should be issued before the application is made, before the Form 8 is completed or before the annual review (where an EHCP is concerned).</p>
5. Student Questionnaire	<p>Obtaining students' views regarding access arrangements is essential to the application process; they are able to provide relevant and up-to-date information of their use of their concession in order to tailor it to their individual needs. This questionnaire is for capturing the student's perspective and, for post 16, their authorisation for application for EAA.</p>	<p>Use this questionnaire to obtain the student's perspective about their use of their EAA as evidence of normal way of working.</p>
6. Summary of Information to Complete a Form 8	<p>Gathering the right information for completion of the Form 8 Part 1 can be time consuming and difficult to track down. This form provides, in a single view, a proforma for summarising the appropriate information for completing the Form 8 as and when the information becomes available.</p>	<p>Use this document to gather the information needed for completing the Form 8. This document can be a working document and can be set up as soon as the student enters the setting. It can be completed by admin support staff for the SENCO/specialist assessor to transfer the information to the Form 8 when needed.</p>
7. Teacher Feedback on internal Exams	<p>Gathering evidence of use is key to the application of access arrangements, as the JCQ states that if the candidate has never used the arrangement, they do not need it and therefore the application for it is unnecessary. This questionnaire is to be used to gather evidence of use of the access arrangements. The information might direct teachers to provide additional advice for the student about how to put their arrangement to the best use.</p>	<p>Use during any internal exam to gather evidence of use of the EAA being considered. Print this form onto brightly coloured paper. Arrange for it to be attached to the front of any internal exams. Candidates should be asked to complete the first section, the invigilator the second section, and the teacher marking the paper finally completes the last section. Candidates with extra time should be asked to change colour pen (e.g. from blue to green) to write their answers during the extra time, to demonstrate use of the extra time allowed.</p>
8. Parent Questionnaire	<p>It is always important to involve parents/carers in the development of SEND provision for their child. And that background evidence is collated which could form a valuable part in deciding which EAA should be applied for. This questionnaire provides a prompt for parents when collating evidence of need and background information before deciding upon the EAA to be applied for.</p>	<p>Issue to parents for candidates who have complex needs which require specific EAA. Issue before a specialist assessment takes place and provide the information to the specialist assessor. Publish on your website for parents to access directly if they have concerns.</p>

9. Template Detailed File Note: Medical and Complex Needs	The need for completing a Detailed File Note is now requested in the JCQ Regs for a number of conditions, such as Autism and Medical Needs. This is a template Detailed File Note for the SENCO to adapt and use within your setting.	This template can be used as a Detailed File Note for any student who requires it. Copy and paste it onto your School letter-headed paper.
10. Template Short File Note: Word processor/reader/prompter/rest breaks	The need for a Short File Note is outlined within the JCQ Regs as needed for Centre delegated EAA, such as rest breaks. This is a template Short File Note for use within your setting.	Cut and paste onto Centre headed paper. It is best practice to use for all Centre delegated EAA, such as word processor, reader, rest breaks and prompter.
11. Template Letter to Parents	Involvement and information for parents is invaluable for keeping them informed of what is taking place and to prevent potential problems further down the line. This is a template letter is for issuing to parents once the application has been approved.	Following the AAI application issue this letter to parents to provide them with information regarding the approved EAA which will be put into place for their son or daughter.
18. Template Summary Spreadsheet	It can often be difficult to track the paperwork associated with EAA. This document is designed as a working document to keep track of the process of application.	Use as an overview to track the progress of the evidence-gathering and paperwork completion throughout the process of application.

CHAPTER SIX: Audit Documents

Document	What information does the document provide?	How to use this document:
2. Access Arrangements Policy Audit	Every setting should have an EAA policy which details the processes and procedures of application in your setting. The policy is particularly important when considering access arrangements are reasonable adjustments, as defined under the Equality Act 2010 and in effect are regulated through legislation. This document provides a checklist for auditing your EAA Policy.	Refer to this document to draft your access arrangements policy as it provides you with a checklist of what needs to be part of the policy.
3. Exam Access Arrangements Checklist	Remembering what needs to be done for each access arrangement application can be confusing and complicated. This document provides a checklist as an aide memoire to aid the SENCO and Specialist Assessor to know what needs to be done and in which order.	This form can be used to check your practices and procedures or alternatively it can be used for each candidate as a checklist to monitor when an action, form or process has been completed,
4. Completing Form 8 Audit	Completing the Form 8 Part 1 can be a very time-consuming and labour-intensive process. This checklist prompts the SENCO or Specialist Assessor for the information required for each section of the Form 8 to ensure it is completed satisfactorily.	Use this checklist as an aide memoire to direct the SENCO into what information is needed to complete the Form 8 Part 1. Use it to Audit whether Form 8s are completed appropriately.

5. Teacher Self-Audit	This checklist is for teachers to audit their understanding of EAA.	Use to audit teachers' knowledge and understanding of EAAs processes within the setting and to identify any training needs moving forward.
6. Senior Leader Self-Audit	The ultimate responsibility for the implementation of EAA rests with the Senior Leadership Team. This checklist is for senior leaders to audit their own practice in ensuring EAA within their setting comply with JCQ Regulations	All senior leaders should use this document to assess their practice in overseeing the implementation of EAA.
7. Exams Officer Self-Audit	The Exams Officer plays a pivotal role in application of EAA, but is not required to make decisions regarding which students receive them. This audit provides a detailed checklist to ensure the Exams Officer is fully aware of their role and responsibility.	All Exams Officers should use this tool to check their level of knowledge and expertise and to identify any gaps in their performance.
8. SENCO Self-Audit	This document provides the SENCo with a means of auditing their implementation of the EAA across their setting.	To be used by the SENCO to audit their own performance regarding the implementation of EAAs.
9. Auditing Exam Access Arrangements Evidence Files	It is best practice for someone within the senior leadership team to routinely monitor the access arrangements files for JCQ compliancy and to ensure candidates are being provided with appropriate arrangements.	This document is to be used by someone in authority, such as the SEND governor or Head of Centre, to monitor and audit the evidence gathered by the SEND team for application for EAA.